

The College-Man
and the
Ministry of Christ



THE REV. JAMES BEVERIDGE LEE

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BY THE REV. JAMES BEVERIDGE LEE, D.D.

“Remember the Lord afar off,
And let Jerusalem come into your mind.”
—Jeremiah 51: 50.

Jeremiah has been commanded to speak this message to a people away from home. It is Jehovah's challenge to a nation in exile,—a nation whose decayed religious impulse was not merely neglecting to open the windows toward Jerusalem, but even neglecting to pray to God.

Less than a generation ago Nebuchadnezzar's well-disciplined army of invasion had swept over northern Palestine, meeting with as little resistance as the swellings of the

Jordan when they flood the lowlands in the time of harvest. Emboldened by unvarying triumphs the overwhelming wave rolled southward to Jerusalem, leaving its broad track strewn with the wreckage of war. Jerusalem, the pride and hope of a dissolute nation, for a brief time maintained a defence rather by the stubbornness of its walls than by any gallantry of its defenders,—a narrow island in the midst of a turbulent sea,—until driven by the lust of conquest, the fierce tide swept above the strongholds of Zion, engulfed the palaces of pride and added to the jetsam of war that splendid temple dedicated to Israel's God. The physical wreckage of the campaign,—a wretched crowd of captives, was borne backward across the Euphrates by the ebbing tide of conquest, and scattered in the midst of world-conquering Babylon. After the deportation came the exile, and, in the midst

of the exile came a prophet of the Fatherland appealing for heroic altruism and fidelity to God.

THREE POTENT TEMPTATIONS.

Temptation to Commercialism. In Babylonia the Hebrew spirit was threatened by three potent temptations, each of them made more seductive by the peculiar conditions of the exile. In every age commerce has been fascinating to the Jew. He is alert and successful in every profession, but he is born to business. That is his birth-right. His home is the market-place and his native air is the shop. His own sacred books affirm that God gave him the power to get wealth. That power has never atrophied. Whether he has little capital or large his commercial acumen and his methods of bargaining enable him to succeed where others would utterly

fail. In the period before the exile Jerusalem offered a very restricted field to business enterprise. Palestine contained no great trade emporium, although the caravan route from the Orient to the Occident drew across its length. The world-marts lay outside. But when the Hebrews were exiled they found in Babylon, opulent with the riches of subjugated nations, unlimited opportunities for the accumulation of untold wealth. The danger was that, in the midst of such opportunities, a greed for gold would develop and neutralize the longing for the home-land; so that, when the exile ended, those who had found it financially profitable, and whose vast fortunes might be applied to the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple, would feel that the sacrifice was too great, and thus selfish advantage would prevail over religious duty. Indeed the records of the restoration show that there were many who

chose to remain in Babylon and serve Mammon, rather than to journey to Jerusalem in the service of God.

**Temptation to
Sensualism.**

Besides, Babylon offered to the exiles a profusion of sensual gratifications. Judea had not lacked innocent pleasures in those days when every man sat under his own vine and fig-tree. Jerusalem had not been without those that were base-born, but the Hebrew life was ordinarily simple and its pleasures recreative. In Babylon the profligate crowded out the innocent. Popular craving for amusement developed into a passion and no diversion was certain of patronage unless it was florid, coarse and base. Luxury produced idleness, and idleness dissoluteness; days became holidays and nights, revels. The exile thrust Israel into all this abandoned life. These

wanton follies beset and allured her. Thus, little by little, self-indulgence weakened self-control and the old heroic ideals yielded to vanity and vice, so that the Hebrew spirit, which was set for the world's pilot-star, faded and grew dim.

Temptation to Irreligion.	And, in addition to this, Babylon was a heathen land.
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The principal streets were crowded with temples, and unsheltered idol-figures were everywhere. Here Hebrews who had never mentioned heathen gods found their names passing readily over their lips; demoralizing superstitions were practiced without protest, and false religious teachings were accepted as commonplaces and tolerated. Synagogues were erected by the pious to preserve the hallowed memories of Moriah, but they were unvisited by the masses; the old

psalms were forgotten, the services of the priests were neglected, and the legal code disallowed. Long before the seventy years of exile ended it became evident that God's summons to rebuild His temple and to re-establish His worship would find people useless for His world-purposes by reason of a secularized and irreligious life.

Such was Israel's exile environment. Its enticement was so persistent and successful that when Nehemiah, under commission of Artaxerxes, uttered Jehovah's call for the restoration of Jerusalem, only a "remnant" gave response and returned to make Jerusalem the joy of all the earth and the temple a house of prayer for all nations, according to the purpose and the promise of God.

TEMPTATIONS OF THE COLLEGE EXILE.

These facts have a very special

meaning for us who are college-men, because we too are away from home. Student-bodies are segregated. Student-life is an exile. Separated, for the duty of study, to the college or university quadrangle, we have our own little world, a microcosm, in which we live; but which is, notwithstanding its peculiar atmosphere, a very exact replica of the macrocosm outside. The big-world temptations crowd the campus, they attend the class-rooms more diligently than do the best students; and beside every study table they are always to be found, unseen but not unfelt. Foremost in the group are the three temptations that always beset exiles.

Commercialism. Commercialism is here insinuating that success is not what a man is, but what he has; that it is better to make a living

than to make a life, and that a man's business is to get on in the world rather than to help the world to get on—obscuring the awful fact that greed, when it enslaves the intellect to mere wealth-winning, leaves life a misshapen and shriveled dwarf.

Sensualism. Sensualism is here
arguing for self-
gratification and
ease; opposing selfsacrifice and the
appeal of the difficult; urging that
there are gentlemanly vices,
necessary sins and beneficial indul-
gences; but concealing the wholesome
truth that propriety is not piety;
nor respectability, purity; nor cloist-
ered sin, virtue. And here too is

Paganism. Paganism, sowing
the student's mind
with bewildering
interrogatives; darkening his soul-

windows and dulling his consciousness of God; silencing his prayers and interrupting his religious practices; substituting foot-notes and appendices for the fundamental truth-texts of revelation; and denying that aspiration is God's promise of life's possibilities, and that "inspiration is the prerogative of every man who stands on the windward side of the Almighty."

These are the peculiar temptations that meet every man who matriculates for study in any college or university. The danger is that when men reach the end of the curriculum and stand at the exit-door of the school career, well equipped and dauntless, with the authoritative summons to the highest possible service of God and man sounding in their ears, they will be so possessed by the bread-and-butter idea of life, so alienated from the cross-bearing Christ, and so depleted in religious enthusiasm that they will

live as citizens of Babylon rather than as citizens of the Commonwealth of God. For this reason every college exile should ponder the old-time appeal,—“Remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.”

REMEMBERING GOD.

Significance to	No Hebrew could
the Hebrew.	remember God
	without thinking

of Him as existing at the heart of his racial history. Jehovah was interwoven with all his past. To forget Him was to disregard his ancestry. It was to forget “the rock whence he was hewn and the pit whence he was digged.” It was “to drink of the water of the old pool but to forget him that fashioned it long ago.” It was to disclaim his heirship of far-off generations and his indebtedness to his fathers’ God. Nor could a Hebrew

remember God without recalling that he had been made partner in a divine world-program. Had not Abraham, newly migrated to Palestine, looked out upon the myriad stars of night and heard Jehovah promise that in him all the families of the earth would be blessed? And were not those promises which had been sung so gloriously by psalmists and declaimed in sublimest rhetoric by prophets still unfulfilled? How could a Hebrew remember God without becoming conscious of God's claim upon his own life? That was the teaching of history, and that was the practical purpose in prophecy. Every thought of Jehovah was an appeal for him to resist the debasing tendencies of exile; to cut the thread and to break the shuttle by which he was being interwoven with a life meaningless and useless, and to answer back to the Godhead's call for human help, "Here am I, send me!"

Meaning to the Thoughts and feel-
College Man. ings akin to these
 must stir and fer-

ment in every exile of the quadrangle who permits himself to remember God. Our fathers did not always know a Father-God. The records tell us that our Saxon ancestors "worshipped the stern Woden, in the forests, at night, where amid the rays of flickering torches they sacrificed their own children in the worship of the gods. We were thus to the very twilight of the modern world." At that time, men whose souls had been fired by the wonderful message carried to them from Bethlehem, and whose eyes had been touched to clear vision of the meanings of life by the Gospel of Calvary, fought their way through the same temptations that beset us, and not counting their lives as owned by themselves, bravely bore the truth-torch to our race of blue-eyed, fierce-spirited giants, and kindled in

their hearts that fire-glow of Christianity that makes us what we are.

The Great Adventure. Today twin nations,
speaking the English tongue, sit supreme in the council chamber of world-powers,—kings among kings. But He whose kindness has made them great has promulgated in Christ the universal law,—“Exalted to give,” and declared, “The greatest of all is the servant of all.” Our privileges insist upon a propaganda. Our Christianity compels a crusade. It is the very evident expectation of God that the non-Christian world shall find its spiritual blessing through us. But the divine expectation will fail of its fulfilment if those who, because of their college and university privileges, have been told off for leadership, fail to assume the functions assigned them, and to accept the undertakings

committed to them. In the past God struggled with our fathers for the privilege of blessing them,—the blessing has come. He promises that in the future He will engage in a similar struggle for the blessing of all mankind,—that blessing waits. Those who remember God will understand why it waits. They will learn that God wants men, strong, capable men, men with red blood and fine spirit, men of intellect, of judgment, of spiritual passion, men who have received freely from God and are able to give freely to their fellow men. They will find God searching every class-room and quadrangle for men like that, whom He may make leaders in the divine work of regenerating a world.

EXILES OF THE QUADRANGLE, BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND FOR THE PURPOSES OF GOD AWAY FROM HOME, REMEMBER GOD! YE ARE NOT

*YOUR OWN, YE ARE BOUGHT
WITH A PRICE, THEREFORE
GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODIES
AND IN YOUR SPIRITS WHICH
ARE THE LORD'S.*

REMEMBERING JERUSALEM.

There is something in the prophet's appeal for a remembrance of God that carries down the years and impinges upon our religious indifference, summoning us, by the holiest motive, to enlist in God's redemptive undertaking. But when the prophet asks that Jerusalem shall come into mind, is not that an anti-climax, and does it not weaken his appeal? I do not think so. Jerusalem, of which Jeremiah is speaking, is a fire-swept ruin.

The Appeal of	It is not the city
Desperate Need.	"glorious for situ-
	ation," "the joy of
the whole earth."	His appeal does

not spring from its greatness, but from its meanness; not from its populousness, but from its desolation; not from its glory, but from its shame. Elsewhere he describes it in this fashion:

“How doth the city sit solitary!
She that was full of people!
The ways of Zion do languish,
None come to her solemn feasts,
All her gates are desolate.
Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by?”

This appeal of helplessness and misery gripped the heart of the patriotic exile with a pathetic imperative that sent him out to rebuild Jerusalem. It was this that came to Nehemiah, in Shushan palace, by the lips of Hanani, lately come from Jerusalem, and so appalled him that the King, seeing his melancholy face, questioned, “Why is thy countenance sad? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart.” To whom Nehemiah answered, “Let

the King live! Why should not my countenance be sad when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchers, lieth waste and the gates thereof are burned with fire?" Jerusalem was a ruin; its physical desolation being the accompaniment of a more woful ruin that had overwhelmed an apostate nation. To let Jerusalem come into mind meant to renounce personal ambitions, to stretch the mind to unselfish proportions, and to dignify life with a motive and a purpose worthy of the Hebrew name.

**The Soul
a Ruin.**

There are Jerusalems in every spiritual landscape, and ruins in every human soul. Whoever passes among men observing their altars and their creeds, their doubts and their disbeliefs, will discover, like Nehemiah, that the ruins are very wide and that there is "much

rubbish," and whoever studies humanity man by man, will find the ruined temple and the violated shrine in every life. These world-ruins have made their appeal to God. The divine answer to their appeal is Jesus Christ, who is God revealing Himself in human life as its Master-builder. God's plan of restoration is magnificent and His purpose is a divine passion, but the work drags wearily, because the human helpers are few, He designed the rebuilding of Jerusalem, but his design was compelled to wait for Babylonian volunteers. He planned to replace the temple in its ancient grandeur, but the building was delayed and left incomplete because exiles whom He summoned to become porters and priests, denied Him their service. And God purposes the restoration of all the ruins in the world's life. He has promised, not only a holy city, but also a new heaven and a new earth.

**Servants
Needed.**

But these plans
can be realized only
as His exiles put
on the working clothes of servants, as
He did whose name they bear, and
offer themselves unselfishly and un-
reservedly for the rebuilding of life
according to the plan of God. These
world-ruins make their appeal to us.
I am not mistaking the temper of the
age when I say that it has dissatisfac-
tion in its own disbelief. It is ready
to exchange denials for affirmations.
It is eager to discover God and to
know Him. It is willing to submit
its intellect to the authority of truth.
It will welcome the man, for it is
both searching for him and expecting
him, who will interpret truth and
vindicate faith in such fashion that
the whole man can submit himself,
in sincerity, to their sway.

Prophets
Needed.

The age is calling
for prophets,—
men who have
found their way through those bewildering passages where humanity gropes, who feel and resent the tyranny of sin, who have caught in Jesus Christ the vision of the true and the possible and who willingly devote to Him everything by which He may be advantaged in restoring to men their ideal and their hope. The appeal of the age should have an enthusiastic response from the Christian men of the quadrangle, who, sensible of God's help hitherto in their own lives, ought to devote themselves to the helping of God in other lives hereafter, saying with Paul, "As much as in me lies I am ready to preach the gospel."

THE MINISTRY WORTH WHILE.

A writer in a recent journal declares that "The sensible and well in-

formed as well as the eccentric and hypercritical are asking in all honesty today, 'Is the minister worth while?'" I would answer,—All ministers do not have the same value, much depends upon ability and personality. Sometimes a minister is found who is not, apparently, worth while. But *the ministry is always worth while.*

**Calling and
Career.**

It is true that every calling is an opportunity to serve mankind, but it is also true that the supreme empire of service is that to which Jesus Christ gave His life. Man's ministry to man in the things of God is always worth while. You may work upon marble, but better material is a human life; you may spread your canvas with beauty, but it is rarer art to color divinely a human soul; you may write a song or symphony, but it is higher service to give

to men a heart of joy; you may grind your lens and discover unknown worlds, but it is truer service to enable men to vision the unsuspected goodness of God; you may use your meter and balance, charge your crucible and alembic, forge your piston and crank,—but you will better serve men's deepest needs if you tell them the fact of the historical and the living Christ, if you teach them that Christian living is unselfish living, that the successful life is the helpful life, and that helpfulness is the imperative of holiness.

**Incarnating
the Master.**

There is no calling
that is more worth
while than the ser-

vice of Christ, and in the service of Christ there is no ministry that so closely reproduces His own as that of the gospel preacher. "To be like Christ, to stand in His stead and

speak in His behalf, sensible of a divine commission, persuaded that we are His ambassadors not by fallible sacerdotal selection, not by the market law of supply and demand, but by the immediate, internal, effectual call of God; and thus persuaded, to take the truths of Holy Scripture and unfold, illustrate, amplify them for

enlightenment and
What is Gospel persuasion, and under
Preaching? the guidance

of the Holy Spirit, to have them intensified by profound personal conviction, fused in the fires of one's own soul, poured upon waiting ears and hearts from hearts and lips touched with God's own altar-fire, and accompanied by every possible adjunct of effective posture and voice—this is preaching.”* This is the need of the times. There are other divinely-appointed implements and weapons, but the instrument of instruments is the

* “The Ideal Ministry,” Johnson, p. 17.

preaching of the gospel. Every man who is graduating from student privileges and pressing forward to take a helpful part in the world of men, ought to stretch out his hand toward the Christian ministry with as much eagerness as David, when he reached after Goliath's sword, saying, "There is none like that! Give it me!"

EXILES OF THE QUAD-
RANGLE, LISTEN! TWO VOICES
ARE APPEALING TO YOUR LIFE
TODAY. ONE IS A VOICE WITHIN.
IT SPEAKS TO YOU OF YOUR
PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.
IT REMINDS YOU OF YOUR DUTY
AND YOUR DESTINY. IT BIDS
YOU REMEMBER GOD!

THE OTHER VOICE IS THE
HEART-SOB OF RUINED HUMAN-
ITY, THE CONFUSED, MULTI-
TUDINOUS OUTCRY OF ITS SOR-
ROW AND ITS SIN, ITS YEARN-
ING AND ITS HOPE, ITS BE-

WILDERMENT AND ITS DISTRESS. IT BIDS YOU LET JERUSALEM COME INTO YOUR MIND.

IS IT NOT TRUE THAT YOU HEAR THESE VOICES? THEY BRING TO YOU THE PRIVILEGE OF FELLOWSHIP IN THAT PASSION FOR GOD AND ENTHUSIASM FOR MEN WHICH MAKE THE AGE-LONG ATTRACTION OF THE CROSS: THEY BRING TO YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE YOUR LIFE A PART OF THE BLESSED ENGINERY OF REDEMPTION: THEY ARE YOUR CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST.

When Jeremiah had delivered his inspired summons, one Hebrew exile, quickened to a sincere soul-passion, uttered his vow of undying faithfulness to sacred ideals and purposes. His fellow-exiles, swept by the splendid contagion of his zeal, caught up the words of his vow, and setting them to the solemn music of one of the old chants of the temple service,

sang them to hearten one another as they too volunteered their lives in loyalty to Jehovah and in devotion to the Holy City.

My tongue to my mouth's roof let cleave,
Nor e'er my voice in speech employ,
If thee, Jerusalem, I leave,
And count not God my chiefest joy.

CAN YOU SING THAT SONG? WILL YOU DO IT? WILL YOU RESPOND TO THE DIVINE APPEAL AND CALL WITH A VOW LIKE THAT? IF THIS SOUL-PASSION IS YOURS, TELL IT OUT! ITS CONTAGION MAY INSPIRE OTHERS WHO WILL ALLY THEMSELVES WITH YOU AS PART OF THE GREAT ARMY THAT IS CONSECRATE TO THE PROPAGANDA OF THE CROSS. WHEN THE MEN WHOM CULTURE HAS QUALIFIED FOR LEADERSHIP VOW LIKE THAT THE CHURCH WILL BECOME THE JOY OF THE WHOLE EARTH, AND JEHOVAH-JESUS THE WORLD'S GOD.

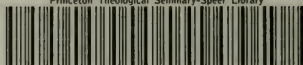


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